Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A screening assay for identifying a selective IPC synthase inhibitor which assay comprises contacting a test compound with engineered cells whose capability to synthesize sphingolipids depends on the addition of exogenous phytosphingosine and which are capable of sustained growth via compensatory phospholipids, adding phytosphingosine, and determining IPC synthase inhibition by the test compound by reference to any cell growth inhibition.

2. (Original) Engineered cells whose capability to synthesize sphingolipids depends on the addition of exogenous phytosphingosine and which are capable of sustained growth via compensatory phospholipids.

3. (Original) Cells as claimed in claim 2 wherein the host strain is an lcb1/SLC1-1 strain.

4. (Currently amended) Engineered cells whose capability to synthesize sphingolipids depends on the addition of exogenous phytosphingosine and which are capable of sustained growth via compensatory phospholipids, wherein the host strain is an lcb1/SLC1-1 strain and ~~Cells as claimed in claim 3~~ wherein the SLC1-1 gene is under the control of the glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (~~GDP3~~GPD3) ~~gene~~ promoter.

5. (Currently amended) Cells as claimed in claim 2 wherein the host strain is lcb1/pGPD3-SLC1-1.

6. (Currently amended) S. cerevisiae ~~(lcb1/pGPD-SLC-1)~~ yeast cells comprising an lcb1 allele and overexpressing an SLC1-1 gene that is operably linked to a heterologous promoter, wherein the promoter is glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GPD3).

7. (Withdrawn) A selective IPC synthase inhibitor identified using the method of claim 1.

8. (New) Cells as claimed in claim 2, wherein the cells comprise an lcb1 allele and overexpress an SLC1-1 gene that is operably linked to a heterologous promoter.

9. (New) The cells of claim 8, wherein the promoter is selected from the phosphoglycerate kinase (PGK) promoter, the enolase 1 (ENO) promoter, the pyruvate kinase (PYK) promoter, and the fructose-bisphosphate aldolase II (FBA) promoter.

10. (New) The assay of claim 1, wherein the cells comprise an lcb1 allele and overexpress an SLC1-1 gene that is operably linked to a heterologous promoter.

11. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the promoter is selected from the phosphoglycerate kinase (PGK) promoter, the enolase 1 (ENO) promoter, the pyruvate kinase (PYK) promoter, and the fructose-bisphosphate aldolase II (FBA) promoter.

12. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the SLC1-1 gene is under the control of the glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GPD3) promoter.

13. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein the cells are S. cerevisiae yeast cells.